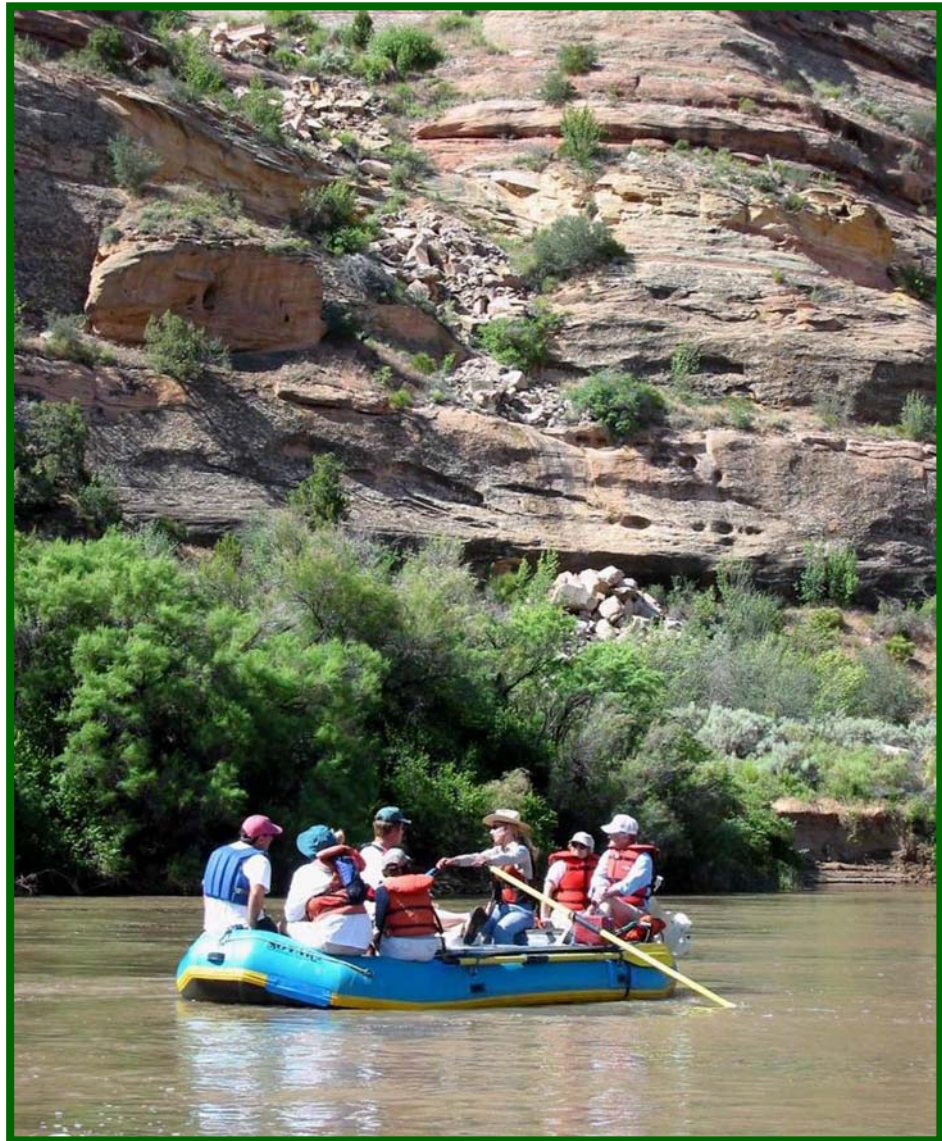


APPENDIX 3

Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area Advertisements and Announcements



Floating through Ruby/Horsethief Canyon

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Bureau of Land Management

LAND USE PLANNING

BACKGROUND

BLM's 162 resource management plans form the basis for every action and approved use on the public lands, including 262 million acres of surface lands and 758 million acres of mineral estate. Planning emphasizes a collaborative approach, where local, State, and Tribal governments, the public, and interest groups work with the BLM to identify appropriate multiple uses of the public lands.



PRICE, UTAH

TIME SENSITIVE PLANNING

The BLM is committed to updating its entire planning base. In particular, the agency has identified 22 "Time Sensitive Plans" that merit immediate attention in addressing high priority issues. The BLM is moving quickly to develop these 22 land use plans and, in order to ensure the success of the initiative, will continue to increase coordination and consultation with the public, local and national interest groups, state government, and Congress. BLM is developing compressed project schedules, implementing efficiencies in processes, and dedicating financial resources. The BLM is directing its resources toward completing these critical plans within the next three years to address the most urgently needed plan revisions and amendments.

The Time Sensitive Plans (TSPs) address a number of complex issues, including:

- Increasing demands on the wildland-urban interface in the rapidly urbanizing West, including recreation and open space;
- Growing numbers of listed and candidate species;
- Increased demands for domestic energy supply, new mineral extraction technologies, and the need for a modernization of energy transmission infrastructure;
- The need to plan for fire management; and
- New Congressional and Administration designations of National Conservation Areas, National Monuments, Wilderness, Wilderness Study Areas, Wild and Scenic Rivers, and National Scenic and Historic trails.



PLANNING PROCESS

The BLM uses a multi-step planning process when developing a land use plan, some of which may occur concurrently. These steps have been fully integrated with the National Environmental Policy Act process and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) guidelines. The steps are:

- Identify Issues
- Develop Planning Criteria
- Inventory Data and Information Collection
- Analyze the Management Situation
- Formulate Alternatives
- Estimate Effects of Alternatives
- Select Preferred Alternative
- Select the Resource Management Plan
- Monitor and Evaluate

TIME SENSITIVE PLAN CONTACTS

Alaska: *Gene Terland* 907-271-3344

- National Petroleum Reserve Alaska-Northwest Integrated Activity Plan

Arizona: *Gregg Simmons* 602-417-9446

- Las Cienegas National Conservation Area (NCA) Plan
- Agua Fria National Monument (NM) Plan / Bradshaw Foothills Amendment

California: *Jack Mills* 916-978-4636

- North and East Colorado Desert Amendment
- North and East Mojave Desert Amendment
- West Mojave Desert Amendment
- Imperial Sand Dunes Amendment
- Santa Rosa/San Jacinto Mountains NM Plan

Colorado: *Sherri Thompson* 303-239-3758

- Colorado Canyons NCA Plan
- Roan Plateau Area Amendment
- Gunnison Gorge NCA Plan

Montana: *Jim Beaver* 406-896-5023

- Powder River & Billings Amendments

New Mexico: *J.W. Whitney* 505-438-7438

- Farmington Revision

Nevada: *Brian Amme* 775-861-6645

- Black Rock/High Rock NCA Plan

Oregon: *Eric Stone* 503-952-6087

- Steens Cooperative Management Area Plan

Utah: *Holly Roberts* 801-539-4272

- Vernal Revision
- Price River Revision

Wyoming: *Joe Patti* 307-775-6101

- Jack Morrow Hills Coordinated Activity Plan
- Buffalo/Powder River Amendment
- Snake River Plan
- Pinedale Revision
- Great Divide Revision

Washington Office Contact

Acting Project Manager:

Mike Mottice 202-452-0362

Planning Group Manager:

Ann Aldrich 202-452-7722

**Secretary Norton Announces New Appointments
to BLM Advisory Council for Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area**

Department of the Interior Secretary Gale Norton announced today the appointment of the 10-member Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area Advisory Council. The council will provide advice and assistance to the Bureau of Land Management on the preparation and implementation of a comprehensive management plan for the new area which was established by public law on October 24, 2000.

Composed of citizens appointed for their expertise in representing the interests of public and private stakeholders, the council will work closely with concerned citizens in developing recommendations for preparation of the management plan. Responsibilities will include gathering and analyzing data, conducting field examinations, and hearing public testimony. Each member provides counsel and advice to the BLM's NCA manager concerning planning and management of the Conservation Area.

"I am pleased to announce the appointment of these talented individuals to serve on Colorado's Resource Advisory Councils," said Greg Gnesios, Manager of the National Conservation Area. "These local, civic-minded citizens come from a variety of backgrounds, and they embody the very idea that people who live close to the resources are in the best position to provide advice on decisions that affect those resources."

Following is the membership list of the Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area Advisory Council members.

Doralyn Genova,	representing of Mesa County.
Warren Gore,	representing grazing interests.
Ken Currey,	representing the Northwest Resource Advisory Council.
Doug Hall,	Mayor of Fruita representing the City of Fruita
Bob Silbernagel,	Journalist representing the public-at-large
Robert J. Keys,	Guide and Outfitter representing commercial outfitters & river users
Dan Rosenthal,	Retired, representing Mountain Bike Users and Recreation
Russell D. Walker,	Associate Professor of Environmental Science & Technology represent environmental science and the public-at-large
John Foster,	Paleontologist, representing science and the public-at-large
Arthur F. Donoho	Electrical Engineer representing Off-Highway vehicles

Information regarding upcoming advisory council meetings will be announced as it becomes available.

-BLM-

January 8, 2002

For Immediate Release

Contact: Jane Ross: 970 224-3027

PLANNING PROCESS FOR COLORADO CANYONS NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREA BEGINS

The Bureau of Land Management's Grand Junction Field Office will begin preparing a Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (RMP/EIS) for the Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area (CCNCA). A Notice Of Intent to initiate these actions and conduct public scoping meetings was published in the Federal Register on Dec. 7, 2001 and signals the beginning of a collaborative effort between the BLM, interested citizens, local communities, and other agencies in determining the future recreation and conservation activities in the CCNCA. The first public meeting will be held January 22, 2002 at the Grand Vista Hotel Ballroom, 2790 Crossroads Blvd. An open house will begin at 3:00 and a presentation on the CCNCA will be given at 4:00 p.m. and again at 6:00 p.m. The open house will offer information on resources found in the CCNCA, describe the planning and environmental impact analysis processes and provide the public with the opportunity to comment on the RMP/EIS.

Active public participation and cooperation with other agencies is integral to the CCNCA plan development to ensure the diverse groups that benefit from the CCNCA's many resources are represented in the decision-making process. Input by all stakeholders will be sought throughout the development of the plan.

The recently-established Colorado Canyons NCA Advisory Council will function as a link between the BLM planning process and the local community. The ten council members reflect a cross section of interests in the area including representatives from ranching/grazing interests, recreational organizations, interested citizens, local elected officials, the Northwest Resource Advisory Council, and a member of the Mesa County Board of Commissioners.

The CCNCA is located west of Grand Junction and south of I-70 and comprises 122,300 acres of rugged, sandstone canyons surrounding a 24 mile stretch of the Colorado River. Included within the CCNCA boundaries are 75,550 pristine acres of the Black Ridge Canyons Wilderness. 5,500 acres of the western boundary of the CCNCA stretch into eastern Utah, but will be under the management of the Grand Junction BLM office. Legislation establishing the CCNCA was passed by Congress during the summer of 2000. The CCNCA was officially designated on October 24, 2000 when President Clinton signed the "Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area and Black Ridge Canyons Wilderness Act of 2000".

The CCNCA management plan will address new management requirements resulting from the designation of the NCA and the Wilderness. Black Ridge Canyons have been managed as a wilderness study area for many years and the wilderness designation will have little effect on the most current activities.

According to Jane Ross, the Team Leader for the NCA Management Plan, "This will be a very comparable planning process to the one BLM initiated for these lands in the mid-1990's, very interactive with the public and very "hands on".

Please contact Jane Ross, 244-3027 for further information on the CCNCA planning process. Written correspondence can be sent to the Bureau of Land Management, 2815 H Road, Grand Junction, CO 81506.

January 2002

For Immediate Release

Contact: Jane Ross: 970 244-3027

PLANNING PROCESS FOR COLORADO CANYONS NATIONAL CONSERVATION AREA BEGINS

The Bureau of Land Management's Grand Junction Field Office will begin preparing a Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (RMP/EIS) for the Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area (CCNCA). A Notice Of Intent to initiate these actions and conduct public scoping meetings was published in the Federal Register on Dec. 7, 2001 and signals the beginning of a collaborative effort between the BLM, interested citizens, local communities, and other agencies in determining the future recreation and conservation activities in the CCNCA. A public meeting will be held February 11, 2002 at the Fruita City Council Chambers, 325 E. Aspen. An open house will begin at 3:00 and a presentation on the CCNCA will be given at 4:00 p.m. and again at 5:00 p.m. The open house will offer information on resources found in the CCNCA, describe the planning and environmental impact analysis processes and provide the public with the opportunity to comment on the RMP/EIS.

Active public participation and cooperation with other agencies is integral to the CCNCA plan development to ensure the diverse groups that benefit from the CCNCA's many resources are represented in the decision-making process. Input by all stakeholders will be sought throughout the development of the plan.

The recently-established Colorado Canyons NCA Advisory Council will function as a link between the BLM planning process and the local community. The ten council members reflect a cross section of interests in the area including representatives from ranching/grazing interests, recreational organizations, interested citizens, local elected officials, the Northwest Resource Advisory Council, and a member of the Mesa County Board of Commissioners.

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The CCNCA management plan will address new management requirements resulting from the designation of the NCA and the Wilderness. Black Ridge Canyons have been managed as a wilderness study area for many years and the wilderness designation will have little effect on the most current activities.

Please contact Jane Ross, 244-3027 for further information on the CCNCA planning process. Written correspondence can be sent to the Bureau of Land Management, 2815 H Road, Grand Junction, CO 81506.

BLM Advisory Council for Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area to Hold First Meeting

The first meeting of the Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area Advisory Council will be held Thursday, February 14, 2002 at White Hall (600 White Avenue, Suite 204) in Grand Junction. The meeting is open to the public and will begin at 3:00 p.m. with a public comment period scheduled at 6:00 p.m. The agenda for this meeting includes the election of council officials, an overview of current budget picture, and a discussion of planning issues related to the preparation of the CCNCA management plan.

The council will work closely with concerned citizens in developing recommendations for preparation of the Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area resource management plan. Active public participation and cooperation with other agencies is integral to the CCNCA plan development to ensure the diverse groups that benefit from the CCNCA's many resources are represented in the decision-making process. The Advisory Council will assist the BLM in soliciting input by all stakeholders throughout the development of the plan. All meetings will be open to the public and will include a time set aside for public comment. Interested persons may make oral statements at the meetings or submit written statements at any meeting.

The CCNCA is located west of Grand Junction and south of I-70 and comprises 122,300 acres of rugged, sandstone canyons surrounding a 24 mile stretch of the Colorado River. Included within the CCNCA boundaries are 75,550 pristine acres of the Black Ridge Canyons Wilderness. 5,500 acres of the western boundary of the CCNCA stretch into eastern Utah, but will be under the management of the Grand Junction BLM office. Legislation establishing the CCNCA was passed by Congress during the summer of 2000 and signed by the President on October 24, 2002.

Following is the membership list of the Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area Advisory Council members.

Doralyn Genova	representing of Mesa County.
Warren Gore,	representing grazing interests.
Ken Currey,	representing the Northwest Resource Advisory Council.

Representing the public-at-large:

Doug Hall,	Russell D. Walker,
Bob Silbernagel,	John Foster,
Robert J. Keys,	Arthur F. Donoho,
Dan Rosenthal,	

Summary minutes of all Council meetings will be maintained at the Bureau of Land Management Office in Grand Junction, Colorado. They are available for public inspection and reproduction during regular business hours within thirty (30) days following the meeting. Please contact Greg Gnesios, (970) 244-3049, or Jane Ross (970) 244-3027 for further information.

-BLM-

BLM Advisory Council for Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area Seeks Public Involvement in Resource Management and Planning Process

The Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area Advisory Council is looking for interested members of the public to assist in the development of the CCNCA Resource Management Plan. The council will sponsor an Open House on Thursday February 28, 2002 at the Grand Junction BLM office, 2815 H Road from 3:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. Anyone interested in taking part in developing the future management of the Colorado Canyons NCA should attend the open house to learn more about the current management practices; management issues that have been identified to date; and future management opportunities for the CCNCA's valuable resources. BLM staff specialists will be available to answer questions and discuss issues pertaining to the CCNCA. Members of the Advisory Council will be in attendance to form community working groups that will begin meeting immediately to identify issues, interests and concerns about how the CCNCA will be managed, and to provide input into the development of management alternatives. The working groups will report to the Advisory Council during their monthly meetings. Active public participation in the working groups is integral to the CCNCA plan development to ensure the diverse groups that benefit from the CCNCA's many resources are represented in the decision-making process.

The first meeting of the Advisory Council was held at White Hall on Thursday February 14, 2002. The Advisory Council chose Mr. Warren Gore to be the Chair of the Advisory Council, and Mr. Dan Rosenthal to be the vice-chair. As a result of the first meeting, four distinct zones within the CCNCA were identified to aid in forming the working groups and focusing discussions:

(1) The Wilderness Zone

This largest zone is the area south of the Colorado River and includes all of the Black Ridge Canyons Wilderness. In addition, this zone includes the 5500 acres of the CCNCA that stretch into Utah. The Wilderness provides opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation such as hiking, hunting, backpacking, horseback riding, wildlife viewing and photography. The wilderness designation does not effect the traditional use of the area for grazing purposes.

(2) Rabbit Valley Zone

Rabbit Valley, bounded by Highway 6 & 50, the Colorado River, the Utah border and Salt Creek, is designated as a separate zone. This zone includes the McDonald Creek Cultural Management Area, Rabbits Ear Mesa, Wildhorse Mesa, the Trail Through Time, the Dinosaur Quarry, and a significant section of Kokopelli's Trail. This zone provides diverse recreational outlets for hiking, mountain biking, camping, horseback riding, off-highway vehicle use, rock-art viewing, and birding. It is also a valuable resource for geological, cultural and paleontological research and education. Traditional grazing activities continue to be supported in this area.

(3) River Zone

The Colorado River corridor through Ruby Canyon from Loma to Westwater is identified as a separate zone. This 24-mile stretch of the river runs through the CCNCA., with Wilderness to the south and other CCNCA land to the north. Recreational activities enjoyed in the River Zone include rafting, floating, kayaking, hunting, hiking, camping, wildlife viewing, and photography.

(4) Mack Ridge Zone

The fourth zone, Mack Ridge, runs along I-70 north of the river from Salt Creek to just east of the Kokopelli Trailhead. This area includes Mary's Loop, Lion's Loop, Steve's Loop and Horsethief Bench. Recreational use of this area has increased dramatically in the last decade and is an increasingly popular day-use area for mountain biking, hiking, horseback riding and shooting. Traditional grazing activities also continue to be supported in this area.

The Advisory Council will continue to meet the second Thursday of each month, from 3:00-7:00 p.m. at White Hall, 600 White Avenue, Room 204, in Grand Junction. The next meeting will be March 14,

2002. All meetings will be open to the public and will include a time set aside for public comment. Interested persons may make oral statements at the meetings or submit written statements at any meeting. Summary minutes of all Council meetings will be maintained at the Bureau of Land Management Office in Grand Junction, Colorado. They are available for public inspection and reproduction during regular business hours within thirty (30) days following the meeting. Following is the membership list of the Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area Advisory Council members.

Doralyn Genova	representing of Mesa County.
Warren Gore,	representing grazing interests.
Ken Currey,	representing the Northwest Resource Advisory Council.

Representing the public-at-large:

Doug Hall,	Russell D. Walker,
Bob Silbernagel,	John Foster,
Robert J. Keys,	Arthur F. Donoho,
Dan Rosenthal,	

As the BLM continues through the planning process for the CCNCA, both the BLM and the council will work closely with concerned citizens in developing recommendations for the management of the CCNCA. Please contact Greg Gnesios, (970) 244-3049, or Jane Ross (970) 244-3027; or by E-mail to Gregory_Gnesios@co.blm.gov or Jane_Ross@co.blm.gov for further information. The Colorado Canyons NCA website can be accessed at <http://www.co.blm.gov/gira.ccnca/ccnca> and will be updated regularly to provide current information on activities relating to the CCNCA planning process. The Department of Interior has begun reinstating full Internet access to BLM employees and websites. Many sites are now accessible, and full connectivity is expected in the next few weeks.

Comments on the CCNCA plan or to the Advisory Council may also be or faxed to (970) 244-3083 or mailed to:

Bureau of Land Management
2815 H Road
Grand Junction, CO 81506
Attn: Jane H. Ross

-BLM-

For release: March 7, 2002

Contact: Jane Ross, (970) 244-3027

BLM Advisory Council for Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area to Hold Meeting

The Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area Advisory Council will meet Thursday, March 14, 2002 at White Hall (600 White Avenue, Suite 204) in Grand Junction. The meeting is open to the public and will begin at 3:00 p.m., with a public comment period scheduled between 5:00 and 6:00 p.m. The agenda for this meeting includes discussions on the role of the working groups being formed to assist in the development of the Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (RMP/EIS) and to discuss public comments received to date as the BLM prepares a scoping report.

CCNCA Advisory Council meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month and are open to the public. Time will be set aside at each meeting for public comment. Interested persons may make oral statements at the meetings or submit written statements at any meeting. Summary minutes of all Advisory Council meetings will be maintained at the Bureau of Land Management Office in Grand Junction, Colorado. They are available for public inspection and reproduction during regular business hours within thirty (30) days following the meeting.

While the BLM and Advisory Council will continue to accept public comments throughout the planning process, comments received before April 30, 2002 will be considered in the preparation of the draft RMP/EIS, scheduled for release late this year. The final RMP/EIS will be completed by October 2003. Comments on the future management of the CCNCA may be submitted directly to the BLM by mail:

BLM
2815 H Road
Grand Junction, CO 81506
Attn: Jane Ross;

mailto:Jane_Ross@co.blm.gov, by fax to (970) 244-3083, or e-mailed to Jane_Ross@co.blm.gov. Please call (970) 244-3027 for further information.

-BLM-

BLM to discuss canyons

The Bureau of Land Management's Grand Junction Field Office has scheduled a public meeting and open house at 3 p.m. Jan. 22 at the Grand Vista Hotel Ballroom, 2790 Crossroads Blvd., to begin preparing a Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement for the Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area.

The public meeting will help the BLM, interested citizens, local communities and other agencies to determine the future recreation and conservation activities in the conservation area.

The open house will offer information on resources in the conservation area, the planning and environmental impact analysis process and give the public an opportunity to comment on the Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement.

Presentations on the Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area CCNCA will be given at 4 and 6 p.m.

The conservation area, established in 2000, is west of Grand Junction and south of Interstate 70. It comprises 122,300 acres of rugged sandstone canyons surrounding a 24-mile stretch of the Colorado River.

Included within its boundaries are 75,550 pristine acres of the Black Ridge Canyons Wilderness. The western boundary includes 5,500 acres that stretch into

eastern Utah.

The area will be under the management of the Grand Junction BLM office. Legislation establishing the conservation area was passed by Congress in 2000. The conservation area was officially designated on Oct. 24, 2000 when President Clinton signed the Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area and Black Ridge Canyons Wilderness Act of 2000.

For information, call Jane Ross at 244-3027. Written correspondence can be sent to the Bureau of Land Management, 2815 Road H, Grand Junction 81506.

You are invited...



to attend a public scoping meeting to learn about the Bureau of Land Management's new environmental impact statement for vegetation treatments on BLM-managed public lands in 16 western states. This open house will include a formal presentation on the scope of the project and explain how you can be involved, and will give you the opportunity to give your comments to the BLM. Two meetings will be held in Grand Junction on January 24.

2 to 5 p.m. or 6 to 9 p.m.

Grand Vista Hotel

2790 Crossroads Blvd

BLM Contact: Harley Metz (970) 244-3076

BLM *Public Meeting* *for the*



Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area Resource Management Plan

Grand Vista Hotel Ballroom

2790 Crossroads Blvd.

Open House at 3:00 p.m.

Presentations at 4:00 & 6:00

Contact Jane Ross 244-3027

208419

BLM will seek input on canyons

By MARIJA B. VADER
The Daily Sentinel

Officials from the Bureau of Land Management want the public's opinion on how to manage the resources of one of the nation's newest conservation areas.

The BLM held an open house Tuesday to begin the planning process for Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area, 10 miles west of Grand Junction.

The federal agency launched public scoping this week for a management plan for Colorado Canyons.

When Colorado Canyons was designated a national conservation area Oct. 24, 2000, the legislation gave the BLM three years to write a management plan.

Colorado Canyons' neighbor to the east — Colorado National Monument — will write its general management plan at the same time.

The agencies will collaborate with one another on visitor use surveys, tribal consultations, trail planning and visitor contact information. Representatives from both agencies will attend each other's planning sessions to maintain optimum communication.

With Colorado Canyons, public comment will be taken until May, with a range of management alternatives identified by June, said manager Greg Gnesios.

The first draft of the Colorado Canyons plan should be complete by October, and that will be followed by a public comment period and a final plan by October 2003, Gnesios said.

Gnesios does not expect any changes in the use of the land, particularly grazing, hunting and fishing.

"It's very important to maintain the traditional uses of the land," Gnesios said. "We don't

The Daily Sentinel
Grand Junction, Colorado
January 23, 2002

The Daily Sentinel • Wednesday, January 23, 2002 5B

CANYONS: Popularity will spike

➤ Continued from page 1B

foresee any big changes, but a lot of it will depend on what the public says."

Still in question is the use of the 24 miles of Colorado River that flows through Colorado Canyons and borders the Black Ridge Canyons Wilderness Area, Gnesios said.

"We don't know what we can and cannot regulate concerning the river," Gnesios said.

Because the issue of water rights became contentious as the area was designated by Congress, the Colorado River was removed from the conservation area.

Managers do know, however, that once the new designation is printed on national maps and atlases, popularity of the area will spike from its current 110,000 visitors annually.

"We are anticipating more mountain bikes, ATVs and dirt bikes," Gnesios said. "Use will increase in all areas."

The federal agency may consider charging fees.

"It's a possibility," Gnesios said. "If the numbers go way up, we may have to look at that."

"If people want to see the quality level of services that they are

accustomed to, fees may have to be part of the picture," Gnesios said.

The BLM staff will use the Ruby Canyon/Black Ridge Integrated Management Plan, written in 1988 with the collaboration of the public, as a launching point for the new management plan, Gnesios said.

"Rather than reinvent the wheel, we'll tee off from this," Gnesios said. "Everybody recognizes this as a good document."

As for Colorado National Monument, the National Park Service will write its general management plan as well.

The process will include writing an environmental impact statement, said Colorado National Monument Superintendent Palma Wilson.

The agency will sponsor three meetings the first week of February to begin gathering ideas from the public.

The Park Service meetings will begin at 6 p.m. On Feb. 5, the gathering will be at Glade Park Community Center, on Feb. 6 at the Fruita Community Center and on Feb. 7 at Grand Junction City Hall.

For information, call the BLM at 244-3027 or Colorado National Monument at 858-3617.

See CANYONS, page 5B ➤

BLM Public Meetings
for the
**Colorado Canyons National
Conservation Area**


**Resource Management Plan
Open House in Fruita**

Monday February 11, 2002 3:00 - 6:00 p.m.
Fruita City Council Chambers 325 E. Aspen

**Colorado Canyons NCA
Advisory Council Meeting**

Thursday February 14, 2002 3:00 - 7:00 p.m.
White Hall 600 White Avenue #204 Grand Jct.

Contact Jane Ross at
(970) 244-3027 with any questions.



750083

Contact Steven Hall: 970-244-3052

For Immediate Release, April 28, 2003

Learn more about the BLM's 123,000-acre Colorado Canyons NCA at May 1 open house

Nearly 123,000 acres of majestic canyons, rugged plateaus and remote trails can be found in the Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area. The Bureau of Land Management is hosting an Open House for the Colorado Canyons NCA from 3 to 7 p.m. Thursday, May 1 at the Whitman Education Center, located at 248 South Fourth St. in Grand Junction.

“The community-based planning process for the Colorado Canyons NCA is nearing the release of draft management alternatives on May 15,” Colorado Canyons NCA Manager Gregory Gnesios said. “We want to take this opportunity to show off the hard work of the citizen advisory council and working groups while sharing information about Colorado Canyons NCA to the people of the Grand Valley.”

The Colorado Canyons NCA is part of the BLM's National Landscape Conservation System, designed to preserve unique landscapes nationwide. It includes the 75,550-acre Black Ridge Canyons Wilderness, the wide-open spaces of Rabbit Valley, the challenging mountain bike trails of Mack Ridge and access to 23 miles of the Colorado River through Ruby and Horsethief canyons. The nationally renowned Kokopelli's Trail also originates and travels through the Colorado Canyons NCA on its way to Moab, Utah.

Colorado Canyons NCA also contains world-class paleontological resources including many late-Jurassic dinosaur fossils. Many of these can be easily viewed at interpretive trail sites at The Trail Through Time, the Fruita Paleo Area, and Dinosaur Hill.

The legislation creating Colorado Canyons NCA required the formation of a 10-person Advisory Council and the completion of Resource Management Plan (RMP). The Advisory Council meets monthly and discusses issues and makes recommendations on management goals for the plan. A draft of the RMP should be completed by the end of the summer and copies made available to the public by October 2003.

The RMP represents the work of hundreds of individuals representing numerous interest groups in the Mesa County area, plus collaboration with the National Park Service, Colorado Division of Wildlife, Northwest Resource Advisory Council, Mesa County Commissioners, City of Fruita, and many others.

“Our ultimate goal is to ensure that future management of the Colorado Canyons NCA meets the needs of current and future visitors and the community while preserving its valuable natural and cultural resources,” Gnesios said.

###

Steven Hall
Western Slope Public Affairs
Bureau of Land Management
2815 H Rd.
Grand Junction, CO 81506
970-244-3052
steven_hall@co.blm.gov

**COLORADO CANYONS NATIONAL
CONSERVATION AREA**
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
RMP/EIS ALTERNATIVES BRIEFING

- The Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area & Black Ridge Wilderness Act of 2000
- Community Collaboration
 - CCNCA Advisory Council
 - Working Groups
- Cooperating Agency Agreement
- Alternative Themes
- Alternative Development by Planning Zone

RMP/EIS ALTERNATIVES BRIEFING

- Alternative 1 – Existing Management
- Alternative 2 – Recreation Emphasis
- Alternative 3 – Adaptive Management
- Alternative 4 – Conservation Emphasis

**The Colorado Canyons National Conservation
Area & Black Ridge Wilderness Act of 2000**

- Signed October 24, 2000

- Designated 75,550 acres of Wilderness within the 122,300 acre CCNCA
- Required formation of Advisory Council to assist in planning and implementation
- Required development of a comprehensive Resource Management Plan for long range protection

The Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area Resource Management Plan

- Will describe appropriate uses and management
- Provide continued management of Black Ridge Communication Site and FAA site
- Continue historic community involvement in interpretation and protection of the CCNCA resources
- Consider the collaboration resulting in the Ruby Canyon/Black Ridge Integrated Resource Management Plan (March 1998)

The Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area Resource Management Plan

- Key points from the legislation:
 - The CCNCA is withdrawn from all forms of entry, patent and mineral leasing
 - OHV use limited to existing roads and trails
 - Hunting will be allowed in the CCNCA
 - Grazing will not be affected by the designation
 - Buffer zones can not be established at boundaries
 - Pursue acquisition of private in-holdings from willing sellers

The Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area Resource Management Plan

- Colorado River Issues
 - The CCNCA does not include the Colorado River to the 100-year high water mark
 - The Act does not affect change authority to regulate recreational activity on the River
 - The BLM retains authority to manage to edge of the River

COMMUNITY COLLABORATION COLORADO CANYONS CONSERVATION AREA ADVISORY COUNCIL

- Required by Enabling Legislation
- Regulated by Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA)
- 10 Members Representing:
 - NW RAC (1)
 - Mesa County Commissioners (1)
 - Grazing Interests (1)
 - Public-at-large (7)

COOPERATING AGENCY AGREEMENT

- BLM and Colorado Department of Natural Resources – signed August 2, 2002
- Cooperate in critical aspects of plan:
 - Timely data and information exchange
 - Input into development of alternatives
 - Identification of common issues and concerns
- Assist in resolution of issues as necessary

COOPERATING AGENCY AGREEMENT

- Potential Areas of Cooperation:

- State Lands Board
 - Acquisition of state land parcel near Mack Ridge
- Colorado Division of Wildlife
 - Coordination on wildlife resources and management
 - Desert Bighorn Sheep
 - Hunting
- Colorado State Parks
 - River Regulations
- Governor's Consistency Review

COOPERATING AGENCY AGREEMENT

- Acquisition of state parcel near Mack Ridge
 - Entire parcel set for disposal by state
 - Approx 960 acres total
 - BLM interest in 418 acres south of I-70
 - Identified as a priority action by Mack Ridge Working Group for possible future trail head
 - Letter sent to State Land Board 1/03
 - Follow-up letter to Craig District Office 2/03

CITIZEN WORKING GROUPS

- Based on 4 Geographic Zones
 - Mack Ridge
 - Rabbit Valley
 - Wilderness
 - River Corridor

MAC K RIDGE ZONE

- Experiences:
 - Meeting challenges
 - Frequent exercise
 - Improving skills
 - Releasing tension

- Benefits
 - Improved health
 - Increased quality of life
 - Sense of freedom

MACK RIDGE ZONE RABBIT VALLEY ZONE

- Experiences:
 - Releasing tension
 - Escaping responsibility
 - Frequent exercise
 - Enjoying exploration
- Benefits:
 - Greater sense of wellness
 - Increased quality of life
 - Improved fitness
 - Greater environmental awareness

RABBIT VALLEY ZONE Multiple Use Activities

- OHV
 - Motorcycle
 - ATV
 - 4 Wheel Drive
- Paleo Resource Education and Conservation
- Mountain Biking
- Grazing
- Hiking
- Horseback Riding
- Camping
- Wildlife Watching
- Sightseeing

RIVER CORRIDOR ZONE

- Experiences:

- Enjoying rest
- Enjoying family & friends
- Enjoying exploration
- Easy access to diverse recreation
- **Benefits:**
 - Enhanced sense of freedom
 - Renewed spirit
 - Greater environmental awareness

COLORADO RIVER CORRIDOR ACTIVITIES WILDERNESS ZONE

- **Experiences:**
 - Feeling good about being isolated and independent
 - Enjoying Wilderness aesthetics
 - Reduce tension
- **Benefits:**
 - Freedom from urban living
 - Renewed spirit
 - Increased quality of life

ALTERNATIVE THEMES

ALTERNATIVE 1

No Action Alternative

- **Maintain Existing Management as Guided By:**
 - Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area and Black Ridge Canyons Wilderness Act of 2000
 - Ruby Canyon/Black Ridge Wilderness Integrated Management Plan (1998)
 - Grand Junction Resource Area Resource Management Plan
 - Interim Management Policy for BLM National Monuments and National Conservation Areas and the Colorado State Directors Guidance for the CCNCA

ALTERNATIVE 2

Recreation Emphasis

- **Objectives:**
 - Enhance area to maximize recreation opportunities

- Concentrate activities into specific areas in order to control use and minimize dispersed resource impacts
- Encourage meeting land health with less emphasis on native plant communities

ALTERNATIVE 2

Recreation Emphasis

- Implementation Actions:
 - Move/construct trails to maximum extent recommended by working groups
 - Eliminate dispersed camping, designate all campsites
 - Require firepans, portable waste systems, eliminate firewood cutting in all high impact areas
 - Develop campgrounds, restrooms and kiosks

ALTERNATIVE 3

Adaptive Management

- Objectives:
 - Preserve the character of area
 - Manage area to maintain current benefit levels
 - Monitor visitor experiences, land health and other factors to determine when increased visitor use triggers the need for increased levels of management
 - Maintain land health and improve prioritized areas of concern

ALTERNATIVE 3

Adaptive Management

- Implementation Actions (based on set baselines and monitoring plan)
 - Incrementally move toward concentrating use in high impact areas
 - Institute systems, as needed, for controlling visitation – permits, reservations, fees
 - Develop facilities as necessary to restore natural resources

ALTERNATIVE 4 Conservation Emphasis

- Objectives:
 - Maximize the conservation of natural resources
 - Improve land health in all areas of concern
 - Preserve character of the area
 - Expand education and interpretation opportunities in all areas

ALTERNATIVE 4 Conservation Emphasis

- Implementation Actions:
 - Maximize trail closure recommended by working groups and Advisory Council
 - Develop trails where net benefit to environment can be achieved
 - Maximize native species in land restoration activities
 - Widen protection zones around high risk resource area
 - Require firepans, portable waste systems, eliminate firewood cutting in areas of the CCNCA

ALTERNATIVES BY ZONE MACK RIDGE ZONE

- GOAL: Maintain Mack Ridge Zone to promote quiet, day-use activities – mountain biking, hiking, running, while allowing limited motorized access.

MACK RIDGE ALTERNATIVES Common to All

- Designate all trails

- Designate approx 10 miles for bike/hike only
- Close all non-designated trails, dead-ends, & roads not used for admin (approx. 3-5 miles)
- Contain all parking areas
- Continue day use only

RABBIT VALLEY ZONE

- GOAL: Maintain the Rabbit Valley area for a wide range of multiple use activities while promoting land health, conserving natural resources

RABBIT VALLEY ALTERNATIVES Common to All

- Designate all trails
- Rehabilitate non-admin, closed and non-designated trails
- Develop system of trails designed to mitigate resource impacts
- Eliminate target shooting south of I-70
- Coordinate management of eastern end of CCNCA with Moab FO

RABBIT VALLEY ALTERNATIVES Common to All

- Develop large event area
- Designate and contain all parking areas
- Develop OHV training area
- Develop and harden recreational parking area separating motorized from horse, etc.
- Limit camping to 7 consecutive nights
- Require portable toilets for overnight dispersed camping

WILDERNESS ZONE

- GOAL: Maintain the Wilderness as an area to experience primitive recreation opportunities including hiking, backpacking, horse back riding and hunting and protect and conserve the outstanding natural resources found there.

WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVES

Common to All

- Designate all trails accessing the Wilderness horse/hike
- Limit motorized/mechanized to designated trails
- Maintain current seasonal closure of Upper and Lower Black Ridge roads
- Close and rehab all non-designated, non-admin roads

WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVES

Common to All

- Develop parking area and dispersed campsites along BS Road
- Close and rehab 2 spur roads
- Develop horse trailer parking site
- Designate trails on newly acquired property (outside Wilderness) as non-motorized/ non-mechanized

WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVES

Common to All

- Develop parking area and dispersed campsites along BS Road
- Close and rehab 2 spur roads
- Develop horse trailer parking site
- Designate trails on newly acquired property (outside Wilderness) as non-motorized/ non-mechanized

- Designate parking along Cherry Stem Rd

WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVES

Common to All

- Contain all parking areas to prevent encroachment
- Construct primitive restrooms at trailheads only as necessary
- As required by future use – construct central camp facility near conjunction of Upper and Lower roads and limit dispersed camping
- Remove all fences that serve no purpose

RIVER CORRIDOR ZONE

- GOAL: Maintain the naturalness of the Colorado River experience while managing the corridor for boating, camping, hunting and sightseeing

RIVER CORRIDOR

RIVER CORRIDOR ALTERNATIVES

Common to All

- No target shooting along river corridor
- Develop detailed river education program
- No camping in sensitive areas for raptor nesting
- Continue toward eradication of tamarisk

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

- Selection of preferred alternative
 - Advisory Council selection 4/3/03

- Public input on alternatives completed by 4/30/03
- Finalize alternatives by 5/15/03
- Analyze impacts of alternatives by 7/1/03
- Draft RMP to printer 9/1/03
- Draft RMP to public 10/03